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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/806,105	03/23/2004	Toru Okada	1075.1255	1845

21171 7590 11/24/2004

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EXAMINER	
JARRETT, RYAN A	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2125	

DATE MAILED: 11/24/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/806,105	OKADA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Ryan A. Jarrett	2125	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *23 March 2004*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-32* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-32* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *3/23/04*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 27 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 27 recites the limitation "said information about said components" in line 5 and "said component database" in line 6. There is insufficient antecedent basis for these limitations in the claim.

Claim 28 recites the limitation "said data exchange" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1-13, 21-23, and 29-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Beauchesne U.S. Patent No. 5,777,876. Beauchesne discloses:

1. A design support system, method, and program for supporting design of a manufacturing line constituted by combination of a plurality of element types, said system comprising: an element type database for storing information about said element types beforehand (e.g., Fig. 2b #210); an indication section which indicates to an operator in selectable manner said element types stored in said element type database (e.g., col. 10 lines 58-67); a selection section capable of selecting arbitrary element types to be used for constituting said manufacturing line from among said element types indicated by said indication section (e.g., col. 10 lines 58-67); a manufacturing line information preparation section for preparing information about said manufacturing line by means of acquiring information about said element types stored in said element type database on the basis of said element types selected by said selection section (e.g., col. 12 lines 20-41, col. 17 lines 11-20); and an output section capable of outputting information about said manufacturing line prepared by said manufacturing line information preparation section (e.g., col. 12 lines 20-41, col. 17 lines 11-20).

2. The design support system according to claim 1, further comprising an element type determination section for determining said element types (e.g., col. 10 lines 58-67) or specifications of said element types on the basis of said element types selected by said selection section, wherein said manufacturing line information preparation section prepares information about said manufacturing line on the basis of said element types or said specifications of said element types determined by said element type determination section.

3. The design support system according to claim 2, wherein said element type database stores determination information in association with said element types, and said element type determination section determines said element types or specifications of said element types on the basis of said determination information (e.g., col. 2 lines 5-17).

4. The design support system according to claim 1, wherein said element type database stores manufacturing steps (processes and devices) employed in said manufacturing line, in association with element types relevant to said manufacturing steps (e.g., col. 2 lines 17-24).

5. The design support system according to claim 3, wherein said element type database stores manufacturing steps (processes and devices) employed in said manufacturing line, in association with element types relevant to said manufacturing steps (e.g., col. 2 lines 17-24).

6. The design support system according to claim 4, wherein said element type database hierarchically manages said manufacturing steps (e.g., Figs. 2a, 2b).

7. The design support system according to claim 5, wherein said element type database hierarchically manages said manufacturing steps (e.g., Figs. 2a, 2b).

8. The design support system according to claim 1, further comprising a component database which stores information about components constituting said element types (e.g., Fig. 2b #230-233, or alternatively Fig. 2b #200, or alternatively Fig. 2b #220).

9. The design support system according to claim 4, further comprising a component database which stores information about components constituting said element types (e.g., Fig. 2b #230-233, or alternatively Fig. 2b #200, or alternatively Fig. 2b #220).

10. The design support system according to claim 6, further comprising a component database which stores information about components constituting said element types (e.g., Fig. 2b #230-233, or alternatively Fig. 2b #200, or alternatively Fig. 2b #220).

11. The design support system according to claim 8, wherein said component database performs sorting and extraction of information about said components registered in said component database while taking predetermined conditions as a key (e.g., col. 14 lines 10-41, col. 16 lines 23-42).

12. The design support system according to claim 9, wherein said component database performs sorting and extraction of information about said components registered in said component database while taking predetermined conditions as a key (e.g., col. 14 lines 10-41, col. 16 lines 23-42).

13. The design support system according to claim 10, wherein said component database performs sorting and extraction of information about said components registered in said component database while taking predetermined conditions as a key (e.g., col. 14 lines 10-41, col. 16 lines 23-42).

21. The design support system according to claim 1, further comprising a manufacturing line information storage section which can store a plurality of pieces of information about said manufacturing line prepared by said manufacturing line information preparation section and which can extract and arrange said plurality of pieces of information about said manufacturing line under arbitrary conditions on the basis of details of said information about said manufacturing line; and a line candidate indication section for indicating said extracted and arranged information about said manufacturing line as a candidate for said manufacturing line (e.g., col. 2 line 25 – col. 4 line 7, col. 14 lines 10-41, col. 16 lines 23-41).

22. The design support system according to claim 1, further comprising: a condition input section which enables input of conditions pertaining to preparation of information about said manufacturing line be prepared by said manufacturing line information preparation section, wherein said manufacturing line information preparation section selectively uses said plurality of element types on the basis of information about said element types stored in said element type database, thereby preparing information about said manufacturing line satisfying said conditions input by said condition input section (e.g., col. 12 lines 20-41).

23. The design support system according to claim 1, further comprising: a data exchange section capable of exchanging data with an external information processing system (e.g., Fig. 1 #10-2).

29. The design support system according to claim 1, wherein information pertaining to said element types stored in said element type database comprises at least any of a manufacturing unit price, a delivery time, accuracy, a processing time, visual information, and comment (e.g., col. 2 lines 5-18, col. 18 lines 23-30), all pertaining to said element types.

30. The design support system according to claim 1, wherein information about said manufacturing line is information pertaining to performance (e.g., col. 10 lines 25-29, col. 12 lines 20-41) or a manufacturing cost said manufacturing line.

5. Claims 1, 4, 6, 8-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Mateau et al. U.S. Patent No. 2004/0064211. Mateau et al. discloses:

1. A design support system, method, and program for supporting design of a manufacturing line constituted by combination of a plurality of element types, said system comprising: an element type database for storing information about said element types beforehand (e.g., [0007], [0016], [0041], [0052]); an indication section which indicates to an operator in selectable manner said element types stored in said element type database (e.g., [0007], [0016], [0041], [0052]); a selection section capable of selecting arbitrary element types to be used for constituting said manufacturing line from among said element types indicated by said indication section (e.g., [0007], [0016], [0041], [0052]); a manufacturing line information preparation section for preparing information about said manufacturing line by means of acquiring information about said element types stored in said element type database on the basis of said element types selected by said selection section (e.g., [0050]); and an output section capable of outputting information about said manufacturing line prepared by said manufacturing line information preparation section (e.g., [0050]).

4. The design support system according to claim 1, wherein said element type database stores manufacturing steps (processes and devices) employed in said manufacturing line, in association with element types relevant to said manufacturing steps (e.g., [0017], [0039], [0051], [0059]-[0061]).

6. The design support system according to claim 4, wherein said element type database hierarchically manages said manufacturing steps (e.g., [0017], [0039], [0051], [0059]-[0061]).

8. The design support system according to claim 1, further comprising a component database which stores information about components constituting said element types (e.g., [0007], [0043], [0046]-[0048], [0053]).

9. The design support system according to claim 4, further comprising a component database which stores information about components constituting said element types (e.g., [0007], [0043], [0046]-[0048], [0053]).

10. The design support system according to claim 6, further comprising a component database which stores information about components constituting said element types (e.g., [0007], [0043], [0046]-[0048], [0053]).

11. The design support system according to claim 8, wherein said component database performs sorting and extraction of information about said components registered in said component database while taking predetermined conditions as a key (sorting and extracting based on database parameters or "keys" is an inherent function of all databases, including the database of [0007], [0043], [0046]-[0048], [0053]).

12. The design support system according to claim 9, wherein said component database performs sorting and extraction of information about said components registered in said component database while taking predetermined conditions as a key (sorting and extracting based on database parameters or "keys" is an inherent function of all databases, including the database of [0007], [0043], [0046]-[0048], [0053]).

13. The design support system according to claim 10, wherein said component database performs sorting and extraction of information about said components registered in said component database while taking predetermined conditions as a key (sorting and extracting based on database parameters or "keys" is an inherent function of all databases, including the database of [0007], [0043], [0046]-[0048], [0053]).

14. The design support system according to claim 8, further comprising information about an engineering drawing of said components in association with said components, wherein said output section outputs information about an engineering drawing of said components (e.g., [0050]).

15. The design support system according to claim 9, further comprising information about an engineering drawing of said components in association with said components, wherein said output section outputs information about an engineering drawing of said components (e.g., [0050]).

16. The design support system according to claim 10, further comprising information about an engineering drawing of said components in association with said components, wherein said output section outputs information about an engineering drawing of said components (e.g., [0050]).

17. The design support system according to claim 11, further comprising information about an engineering drawing of said components in association with said components, wherein said output section outputs information about an engineering drawing of said components (e.g., [0050]).

18. The design support system according to claim 12, further comprising information about an engineering drawing of said components in association with said components, wherein said output section outputs information about an engineering drawing of said components (e.g., [0050]).

19. The design support system according to claim 13, further comprising information about an engineering drawing of said components in association with said components, wherein said output section outputs information about an engineering drawing of said components (e.g., [0050]).

20. The design support system according to claim 1, further comprising: information about the appearance of said element types; and an appearance information preparation section for preparing information about the appearance of said manufacturing line on the basis of information about the appearance of said element types, wherein said output section outputs information about the appearance of said manufacturing line prepared by said appearance information preparation section (e.g., [0050]).

6. Claims 1 and 23-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Fischer et al. U.S. 2004/0158340. Fischer et al. discloses:

1. A design support system, method, and program for supporting design of a manufacturing line constituted by combination of a plurality of element types, said system comprising: an element type database for storing information about said element types beforehand (e.g., [0069], [0070], [0075], [0082]-[0084]); an indication section which indicates to an operator in selectable manner said element types stored in said element type database (e.g., [0069], [0070], [0075], [0082]-[0084]); a selection section capable of selecting arbitrary element types to be used for constituting said manufacturing line from among said element types indicated by said indication section (e.g., [0069], [0070], [0075], [0082]-[0084]); a manufacturing line information preparation section for preparing information about said manufacturing line by means of acquiring information about said element types stored in said element type database on

the basis of said element types selected by said selection section (e.g., [0070], [0075], [0077], [0105]); and an output section capable of outputting information about said manufacturing line prepared by said manufacturing line information preparation section (e.g., [0070], [0075], [0077], [0105]).

23. The design support system according to claim 1, further comprising: a data exchange section capable of exchanging data with an external information processing system (e.g., [0070], [0075], [0077], [0105]).

24. The design support system according to claim 23, wherein said external information processing system is a system for managing manufacturing costs of said manufacturing line; said data exchange section acquires from said external information processing system information about manufacturing costs of said manufacturing line; and said output section outputs said information about said manufacturing line prepared by said manufacturing line information preparation section and said information about manufacturing costs of said manufacturing line data exchange section in such a manner that acquired by said pieces of information can be compared with each other (e.g., [0070], [0075], [0077], [0105]).

25. The design support system according to claim 23, wherein said external information processing system is a purchasing system, and said data exchange section transfers, to said purchasing system, said information about said manufacturing line prepared by said manufacturing line information preparation section (e.g., [0111], [0116], [0124]).

26. The design support system according to claim 24, wherein said external information processing system is a purchasing system, and said data exchange section transfers, to said purchasing system, said information about said manufacturing line prepared by said manufacturing line information preparation section (e.g., [0111], [0116], [0124]).

Conclusion

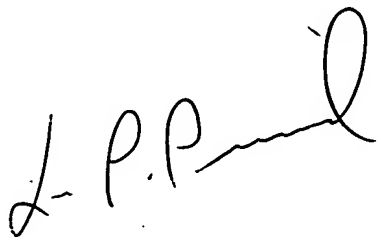
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ryan A. Jarrett whose telephone number is (571) 272-3742. The examiner can normally be reached on 10:00-6:30 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Leo Picard can be reached on (571) 272-3749. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Ryan A. Jarrett
Examiner
Art Unit 2125

11/19/04



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